

Final Evaluation of the Swaziland Training and Institutional Development Project (STRIDE)

**AEP-0085-I-00-2060-00
DO#18**

May 20, 1996

**Presented to:
USAID Swaziland**

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Acronyms

AIC	AIC Training (South Africa)
AOC	Advice of Charge
BWAS	Business Women's Association of Swaziland
CAPM	Commercial Agriculture Production & Mgt Project
CCR	Center for Conflict Resolution (South Africa)
CDSS	Country Development Strategy Statement
CPSP	Country Program Strategic Plan
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
DIVT	Directorate of Industrial and Vocational Training
EDS	Export Development Services (Kenya)
ERC	Economic Review Commission
EU	European Union
EXCED	Executive Education Centre (South Africa)
FLAS	Family Life Association of Swaziland
FSE	Federation of Swaziland Employers
GOS	Government of Swaziland
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GMBH)
HRDA	Human Resource Development Assistance Project
ICMA	International City/County Management Association
IDEAL	Institute for Democracy and Leadership
IDM	Institute of Development Management
IIR	Institute of International Research (South Africa)
IMSSA	Independent Mediation Society of South Africa
Lulote	Lulote/Business Management Extension Programme
LWATI	Lwati Training Institute
MACS	Management Accounting and Controls System
MMC	Managa Management Centre
MLPS	Ministry of Labour and Public Service
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEP	Ministry of Economic Planning
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHUG	Ministry of Housing and Urban Government
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PACD	Project Authorization Completion Date
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
REDSO	Regional Economic Development Services Office
SADCC	South African Development Coordinating Conference
SBGT	Swaziland Business Growth Trust
SCOT	Swaziland College of Technology

SFL	Swaziland Federation of Labour
SFTU	Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions
SIDC	Swaziland Investment Development Corporation
SIMPA	Swaziland Institute of Management and Public Administration
SNACS	Swaziland National Association of Civil Servants
SNAJ	Swaziland National Association of Journalists
SNAT	Swaziland National Association of Teachers
STRIDE	Swaziland Training and Institutional Development Project
SUFIAW	Swaziland Union of Financial Institution and Allied Workers
SWAMDP	Swaziland Manpower Development Project
TECHNIKON	SA TECHNIKON Southern Africa (South Africa)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	U. S. Agency for International Development
VOCTIM	Vocational Training Institute of Manzini
UNISWA	University of Swaziland
WITS	Witswatersrand University (South Africa)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Final Evaluation of the Swaziland Training and Institutional Development Project (STRIDE) (645-0231) was conducted in Swaziland by a Swazi Consultant team from DATEX, Inc. from April 15 to May 12, 1996 for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The objective of this evaluation was to assess the project's contribution to human resource and institutional development in Swaziland. The evaluation focused on the Aurora Associate's contract, and primarily on the training components that they have implemented. To a lesser extent, the policy reform also evaluated components that were managed by the USAID Mission. The field assessment was supplemented by interviews with personnel in the Aurora home office in Washington, D. C. by the Team Leader.

The team wishes to acknowledge the help and information given by the USAID/Swaziland staff particularly given their current limited resources and the Mission's closing. It is especially appreciative of the assistance provided by the Aurora field office staff, notably by Ms. Nombulelo Nxumalo, Ms. Khetsiwe Jonga, and Ms. Mojgan Derakshau.

The team especially thanks all of the members of the Government of Swaziland, the private sector, and labor associations and unions who gave so freely of their time from busy schedules for the team's interviews and discussions. The findings of this assessment were based on their contributions.

The team also thanks Ms. Barbara Rossmiller and Gwen Appel of DATEX, Inc. for their excellent support.

It is our hope that this evaluation will contribute in some measure to the future progress of the Swazi people.

The Evaluation Team

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The change of fortunes for Swaziland was beginning when the STRIDE Project was authorized on May 31, 1990. The deteriorating economic situation and the political changes occurring in the region since then were seized as opportunities by STRIDE to serve as a vehicle generating new perspectives, understandings, and relationships among the principals from the GOS, the private sector and labor. In the latter phase, it appears to have done a commendable job in democratic governance by laying the groundwork for necessary adaptations by all three parties to the inevitable changes taking place.

Given the failure of the project element originally designed to train traditional community leaders and given the emergence of more democratic forms in Swaziland, the leadership training was shifted to address needs of newly elected leaders and to reinforce the trend toward participatory democracy. This encompassed training for parliamentarians, and for newly elected municipal councilors.

A large part of the training over the past eighteen months has been designed to take advantage of opportunities to involve all of the social partners, government, employers, and labor, in a sustained dialogue to facilitate planning for the inevitable changes in the national political and economic structures. The training at first glance seems to cover a wide range of topics, from labor relations and management in the workplace to training for parliamentarians and elected municipal officials. On closer examination, it becomes apparent that all of these training activities have a common purpose - to strengthen and facilitate the movement toward more democratic, participatory forms of government. Bringing together a wide spectrum of interest groups has engendered a productive national dialogue which will contribute greatly to the hope for next stem in the development of a Swazi democracy, the preparation of a constitution.

A further noteworthy facet of these training events is the apparently successful strategy of carefully linking 3rd Country and In-Country training. In many cases, groups and individuals who have participated in various 3rd Country seminars and workshops are then brought together at in-country workshops where they can share ideas and experiences gained in the 3rd Country training and, often find common ground for dealing with larger problems of the changing society.

It is also worth noting that, while the strengthening of local training institutions envisioned under the Cal Poly linkage portion has not been as successful as envisioned, other recent STRIDE activities seem to be making some initial inroads. Training provided to BMEP/Lulote, a local organization devoted to small and micro business development, has greatly strengthened both management and training capabilities. Mostly through its participation as a partner in STRIDE training activities, the local training institution, SIMPA, has formed a linkage with Technikon SA which will provide a continuing source of technical support and backstopping to strengthen SIMPA, particularly in public sector management training and urban governance.

This final evaluation assesses the composite of this project's contributions to human resource and institutional development in Swaziland. It identifies lessons to be learned from the STRIDE experience about how the Agency can design, implement, modify and monitor human resource development and democratic governance assistance endeavors to yield discernable results.

Findings and Conclusions

- A. The STRIDE Project was supportive of USAID Strategic Objectives throughout its six years though target groups and target numbers of trainees were modified following its Mid-Term Evaluation.
- B. The L/T training component initially specified in the original ProAg and Logframe was successfully initiated under Phase I and will be completed in Phase II before the PACD.
- C. The S/T 3rd Country and In-Country training target groups and numbers of trainees were revised radically with the Mid-Term shift in the project strategy; these modifications were established through amendments to the Aurora Contract and, according to the PIR of 3/31/96, are being successfully addressed under that contract.
- D. The shift in STRIDE strategy during its Phase II was an appropriate response to a program environment which was totally different from the environment during the project's first three years.
- E. STRIDE has mobilized a relatively large number of people to interact on topics relevant to critical issues confronting Swaziland. The project has worked with a critical mass of cross-interest groups and the dynamics of their dialogues are having a pronounced effect, especially in the absence of political parties and a clear national policy framework.
- F. In its shift to objectives in the domain of Industrial Relations and Democratic Governance, STRIDE is now recognized as a focal point, catalyst and neutral forum in an evolving process which has opened the avenue for public participation to influence the shaping of policies now in a formative stage.
- G. The sampling of those attending STRIDE Phase II training events confirmed what an analysis of the records in USAID and STRIDE offices indicated. These short-term sessions, particularly those designed to promote understandings and dialogues between government, labor and the private sector, are the most effective vehicle in Swaziland for broadening perspectives and creating a mutuality of purpose. As higher levels of understanding were reached, each subsequent training event built upon those preceding it.

Recommendations

- A. Extend the stay of the present Aurora Chief-of-Party in Swaziland from the scheduled closing date of the STRIDE Office on July 31, 1996 to May 1, 1997 to coincide with closing date of the Aurora contract and the PACD of May 31, 1997. There appear to be sufficient uncommitted funds in the contract pipeline, and if needed, in the USAID-administered portion of the STRIDE project as well, to maintain approximately the current level of activities planned through May 1, 1997
- B. The USAID Regional Office in Gaborone, Botswana should assume management oversight of the STRIDE Office in Swaziland to assure that STRIDE activities make a smooth transition and fit into regional projects designed to address issues such as constitution building, democratic governance, industrial relations, and training in proposal writing.
- C. The Aurora field office in South Africa, in conjunction with the USAID Regional Office in Botswana, should search for possible NGOs and/or non-profit institutions in the field of governance to promote partnerships between those in S.A. and those in a formative stage in Swaziland. The Institute for Democracy and Leadership, as well as the nucleus of impressive talent which served as the driving force on the National Development Strategy, might be considered as potential candidates.

Lessons Learned

Lessons learned in the course of implementing the STRIDE project are as follows.

I. Training for National Impact

- C Most often training is viewed primarily as a way of building the capability of individuals and building the capacity of institutions. Upon the foundation of skilled individuals and strengthened organizations, sectoral or national level impacts are to follow.
- C During Phase II STRIDE reversed that traditional emphasis. It aimed directly at inducing sectoral impacts (e.g. the education and training system) and national impacts (e.g. improved industrial relations). In order to accomplish this, training had to be designed differently in order to extend change to whole communities of interested stakeholders. First, conferences and workshops were used to mobilize and engage large numbers of people from diverse interest groups. Second, every training event was seen as requiring another follow-up activity, such as forming working groups, producing widely disseminated follow-up reports, and organizing follow-up courses or workshops on specialized topics for smaller delegations of people. Third, follow-up conferences and meetings would then be used to bring the groups back together again to reflect on progress and review the

agenda for change. STRIDE purposefully opened the door to broad participation, facilitated the development of networks across interest groups, and gave people an opportunity to set clearer vision and goals for sectoral and national change.

II. Project Steering Committee

- C The record established by the performance of the STRIDE Steering Committee could serve as a model for other training projects. Such a committee is critical to the success of a project and is only effective if it is comprised of individuals with authority to represent their sectors and organizations and who have genuine respect for differences of opinion. They also must share a vision of how to use training as a vehicle to promote significant organizational, sectoral or national change rather seeing training as merely a means of providing skills and knowledge to individuals.
- C The committee must be transparent in its decision making and have clear standards and procedures for scrutinizing and approving applications for training. This is particularly true in regard to L/T training which offers considerable potential reward to an individual for career advancement.

III. Contractor Backstopping

The contractor's record of no drop-outs and an average record return rate of trainees completing academic courses within 80% of the normal time usually scheduled deserves mention of the practices put into effect to achieve these records:

- C Close scrutiny of the goals of the participant and the curricula of the possible institutions to be utilized to insure a match;
- C Installation of a toll-free 800 number for all participants to call the contractor's home office at any time they might have problems or questions;
- C Contacting the faculty advisors of every participant each time the quarterly academic reports were received to assure the school was meeting the participant's expectations, the participants were meeting academic standards, and exploring what could be done if such were not the case;
- C Going to the campus to confer with participants and their advisors as and when problems came into focus;
- C Circulating a monthly newsletter among participants with articles gathered from Swaziland newspapers by the contractor's office in the participants' home country;

- C Utilizing mostly schools in state university systems to get the best bargains for the tuition paid, and then bettering this arrangement by negotiating with the school in question to have USAID-funded participants accorded the same tuition as state residents.

IV. Host Government & Private Sector

It appears that when nominating staff for training, the institutions responsible made advance preparation for the new skills acquired by their staff to be put to good use.

The foregoing factor, along with post-training promotions according to performance, appear to be major incentives in establishing a 100% return rate of trainees to the institutions from which they departed.

V. USAID

The STRIDE Project has demonstrated how a project begun as a traditional training activity can be modified as needed to support a very different strategy of achieving Strategic Objectives required by major changes in the environment in which an assistance program is operating; such flexibility is a highly desirable feature in any training project administered today.

Any undertaking in the realm of Democratic Governance by its very nature does not lend itself to abrupt termination; such projects initiated on a bilateral basis should be assessed with a view to having their most important components assumed by regional projects aiming at the same goals.

Regional project linkages with their bilateral counterparts in Democratic Governance, and the eventual phase-in of regional to replace bilateral backstopping of these projects, will still require extensive oversight and monitoring within the country being affected through national, regional or international NGOs operating in this field; they cannot be solely managed by and from a Regional Office.

Section 1 -- Background

1.1 Changes in the Economic/Political Environment

The wave of political change which has spread through the African continent has finally enveloped Swaziland. For the two decades preceding the nineties the two countries surrounding Swaziland made it a seeming haven of tranquillity and opportunity. The continuing insurgency of Renamo in Mozambique and the policy of apartheid in South Africa were the external circumstances which gave Swaziland the comparative advantage it enjoyed throughout the decade of the eighties. Overall economic growth from 1985 to 1990 averaged between 6% and 9% per year, much of it generated by foreign direct investment attracted by Swaziland's perceived role as an international trader, while South Africa staggered under international economic sanctions. A good part of this foreign direct investment in Swaziland was in manufacturing, much from South Africa itself to circumvent those sanctions.

This situation has now been reversed. The peace negotiated by the U.N. between the government and rebel forces in Mozambique, and the end of apartheid in South Africa, followed by democratic elections in 1994, now make both of these countries relatively more attractive environments for investment. Indeed, some of the South African investments made in Swaziland in the eighties have now been repatriated. Since South Africa achieved majority rule, no major foreign investment projects have been made in Swaziland.

As foreign direct investment declined and the Southern Africa region was hit by successive droughts from 1991-1994, Swaziland's economic growth lost momentum. An estimated average annual growth of less than 2% - 3% is estimated over the next two years, which will be countered by a population growth rate unlikely to fall below 3.5%. As a result, the present stagnant level of GDP per capita in Swaziland will begin to decay. In 1993 Swaziland posted its first balance of payments deficit in eight years, which continues. Lack of investment in manufacturing and deterioration of the agricultural sector has led to rates of unemployed now estimated at 40% between the ages of 16 - 24, and 16% of the total population between 18 - 65. Urban areas are burdened with inflows of rural migrants driven from the countryside by drought and population growth. The two largest cities, Mbabane and Manzini, are growing respectively at 5% and 7% annually.

Against this backdrop, the stability once perceived as a characteristic of the Swazi political system when its neighbors were in the midst of political and ethnic turmoil, now can be analyzed more objectively. The monarchy in Swaziland is now viewed as staunchly conservative. It is the only country in southern Africa which does not subscribe to political democracy based on political parties, though politically oriented groups and labor unions are becoming more strident and visible in pressing for reform and change.

The previous monarch, King Sobhuza II, who died in 1982 after ruling the country for 62 years and leading it to independence in 1968, held extensive powers in all three branches of government. His son and successor, King Mswati III, just celebrated his 28th birthday and is also invested with these powers. Swaziland's bicameral Parliament has the House of Assembly which, since 1993, has had 55 of

its 65 members elected. Twenty (20) of its 30 member Senate are appointed by the King, who has the right to dissolve Parliament at any time. All legislation passed by the Parliament must receive the King's assent, which may be withheld totally or partially. Nonetheless some of the new members of the Parliament are showing an increasing amount of vigor and political courage in questioning the role of government, and they are struggling to redefine that institution's new role and create a legislative power base.

The foregoing brief synopsis is given as a prologue to this evaluation of the STRIDE Project in order to better understand the changing environment underlying the redirection of activity in 1994 to serve as a catalyst in the domain of Democratic Governance. It was a timely response to a situation fraught with misunderstandings, mistrust, and discord among the government, the private sector and the labor unions. There have been some notable STRIDE-sponsored successes in creating harmony among all three of these entities, mostly between the private sector and labor unions.

Continuing economic decline can only exacerbate the demands being made on the government. The dualism between the modern and traditional governance will be greatly tested by the pressures of global economic and political forces which favor a transition to more modern structures, a lesson which more resistant monarchies in the 20th century have learned after it was too late. The emphasis the STRIDE Project has accorded to familiarizing Swazi Parliamentarians with the constitutional debate taking place in South Africa and their proper legislative and budgetary functions was a notable initiative to assist in developing a workable constitutional monarchy. STRIDE is the first donor project to begin a similar initiative to familiarize locally elected officials within newly structured municipalities with management systems required to exercise their responsibilities effectively.

Discussions on revising the existing constitution have already begun. It is recognized that major legislation to support a solid investment climate is lacking in Swaziland, and concerns over the absence of an Investment Code, and a Securities Act, along with an inadequate Companies Act are now being voiced. The recently passed Industrial Relations Act is already deemed inappropriate and counterproductive. Most lacking is a national strategy to provide a framework which would give a rigor to the ordering and relationships of such priorities. During the past eighteen months key personnel from government ministries, labor unions and the private sector have been working to develop a National Development Strategy. STRIDE has provided seminars and workshops to members of two of the eight sub-committees working on this comprehensive planning document. The Education and Training Sub-Committee has benefited greatly from such seminars. Concurrently, under STRIDE sponsorship members the Governance and Public Sector Management Sub-Committee have begun to work.

In summary, the change of fortunes for Swaziland were beginning when the initial STRIDE Project was signed in 1990. The STRIDE project has been used to serve as a vehicle to facilitate dialogues concerning these changes and to generate new perspectives, understandings and relationships among the principals involved from the GOS, the private sector and labor. It appears to have done a commendable job in democratic governance by laying the groundwork for necessary adaptations by all three parties to inevitable changes taking place.

1.2 USAID Program Strategy and Strategic Objectives

Since the beginning of the U.S. bilateral assistance program in Swaziland in 1971, USAID has undertaken general training projects along with the training components of projects in various sectors of program emphasis. In chronological progression during the last two decades, these were the Southern Africa Development Personnel and Training Project (SADPT, 1973); the Southern Africa Manpower Development Project (SAMDP, 1978); the Southern Africa Academic and Skills Training Project (SAAST, 1978); the Swaziland Manpower Skills Development Project (SWAMDP, 1984); and the Swaziland Training and Institutional Development Project (STRIDE, 1990)

The STRIDE Project picked up 55 SWAMDP participants remaining under the Trans-Century Contract of that project, and continued their support and backstopping with SWAMDP funding. The composite of previous USAID training projects, along with sectoral projects in Swaziland with training components, provided 320 participants (206 male and 114 female) with long-term training, and 155 participants (105 male and 50 female) with short-term training.

USAID sponsored training from 1971 through 1989 fell into the following categories: Agriculture & Science - 32%; Education - 27%; Business Administration, Mathematics, Economics - 19%; Health & Population - 11%; Engineering & Architecture - 7%; and Social Science & Humanities - 4%.

The accelerated economic growth which Swaziland experienced during the decade of the '80s showed significant constraints on private sector growth imposed by shortages of semi-skilled, basic technical skills, mid-and-upper level management skills, and accounting and financial analysis skills in both the private sector and those government offices and public institutions designed to service the private sector. The projected shortage of some estimated 2000 personnel with such skills by 1997 was the impetus and framework for the initial design of the STRIDE Project. Most of these assessments and estimates were derived from a 1986 National Manpower Survey of Swaziland which, by 1990, had already been overtaken by the 8% - 9% rate of economic growth in the late '80's.

Against this background it was felt that the STRIDE Project should proceed cautiously and methodically during its first year of implementation while awaiting the Training Needs Assessment by Harmon & Watkins (1991); the In-Country Training Strategy for STRIDE (Aurora Associates, 1991); and the Final Evaluation of the SWAMDP Project (Management Systems International, 1991).

The last USAID Country Development Strategy Statement (CDSS) for FY 1991-1995 listed Manpower Development for Economic Growth as the No. 2 Objective in overall Mission strategy. It described STRIDE, then in a design stage, as a vehicle to "increase awareness and participation in the development process by expanding and facilitating dialogue between those in the traditional and modern sectors, and providing assistance to GOS policy makers and other officials in policy analysis and implementation in specific areas where constraints to growth have been identified". There were no subsequent CDSS, CPSP or other concept papers which could be located at the USAID Mission since most records have been

packed and shipped. Reportedly only Annual Program Impact (API) statements have been required during the past three years. The last API, submitted in March 1995, lists as Strategic Objective No. 2.: "Increase the number of Swazis who effectively direct manage and participate in national development", with the STRIDE Project described as the principal USAID activity for realizing this objective.

1.3 Shift in STRIDE Areas of Emphasis

The original STRIDE Project Agreement (645-0231) signed on May 31, 1990, listed as its purpose in its authorization "the strengthening of Swazi managerial/administrative capabilities in the private sector and in government service and to strengthen training institutions that support private sector growth in Swaziland". This was to be realized through three project components: (1) the training of Swazi managers and administrators; (2) the strengthening of key in-country tertiary training institutions; and (3) support to priority ministries for reform of policies constraining private sector growth and through training traditional leaders. These components were to be achieved mostly through training: 42 L/T scholarships (4 Ph.D.s; 32 M.A.s; 6 B.A.s); 6,600 person days of in-country modern sector training; 5,400 days of in-country traditional sector training, with the contractor providing U.S. and local technical assistance for delivery of training in the last two categories. Strengthening of local institutions was to impart sustainability to in-country modern-sector training.

The STRIDE ProAg was amended once on June 30, 1992 to increase the USAID contribution to \$11,310,000 and the GOS contribution to \$5,662,040. This amendment revised the End-of-Project Status for the first project output, the training of middle and senior level managers, and the project input for long-term U. S. academic training. Those changes reflect the 54 fellowships awarded for public and private sector managers and an increase in the number of person years for long-term U.S. academic training from 108 to 132 student years, extending the program through 1995. No changes were made in this amendment or subsequently in End of Project Status or in the Objective Means of Verification.

Subsequent to the Mid-Term Evaluation of STRIDE in November 1993, a major shift of emphasis on target groups to be addressed took place, brought about largely by the change in the economic environment within Swaziland and the political changes taking place in its neighboring countries. The experience during the first three years of operations brought to light the weakness of certain assumptions in the Project LogFrame which undermined two of the components addressed; these pertained to the Swaziland College of Technology and the University of Swaziland School of Business Administration, the two training institutions initially selected for strengthening and improving management skills.

The difficulties encountered under the Cooperative Agreement under which California Polytechnic University (CalPoly) was to have undertaken linkages with the Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT) and the University of Swaziland (UNISWA), were covered under the Mid-Term Evaluation and, under the Scope of Work for this evaluation, are not reiterated. While some U. S. training is still being carried out by CalPoly, the strengthening of those local institutions described in the original project agreement diminished markedly after USAID/Swaziland requested a Special Evaluation of this cooperative agreement

prior to the Mid-Term Evaluation in 1993. Subsequently USAID/Swaziland identified alternative local institutions which could be dealt with directly rather than through a cooperative agreement mechanism.

Realization of the 3rd component required participation by the GOS Department of Community Development in the STRIDE Steering Committee. Initially the CD representative would have been the only member to propose or to pass judgement on the relevance of any training to improve the administration of civic affairs by traditional leaders at the communal level. The persistent absence of this representative from all Steering Committee meetings effectively registered the lack of interest of this Ministry concerning such training of local Chiefs. Accordingly this 3rd component in the original STRIDE design was also modified by USAID/Swaziland in the project's 2nd Phase to switch the target group and impart administrative and financial management skills to newly elected local and municipal councilmen.

Estimated funding requirements for continuation of these two components were shifted to address the greater concentration on In-Country and 3rd Country Training which characterized the portfolio of activities undertaken during the 2nd Phase of STRIDE. Though not formally covered by any amendment of the ProAg reflecting such a shift of emphasis, the endorsement of both governments was implicit in the actions of the STRIDE Steering Committee and the participation of the three representatives of the Ministry of Labour and Public Service, the GOS Ministry signing the original agreement.

1.4 Close-out of the USAID Bi-Lateral Program

USAID/Swaziland is one of an increasing number of bi-lateral missions now being closed. STRIDE is the single project in the mission portfolio which, since its relatively recent refocus on the USAID Strategic Goal of Democratic Governance, has greatly expanded its scope of activities during the past eighteen months. It is an accepted premise that any USAID intervention in this domain is a long-term process which requires sustained commitment. This rationale stems from the recognition that any hiatus, or worse, an abrupt termination of such a process just begun, has the potential of precipitating setbacks that will make any subsequent initiatives in Democratic Governance all the more difficult.

The closings of USAID Bi-lateral programs in East Africa, and particularly in West Africa where most closings to date have taken place, have in a number of cases seen the shift of bi-lateral project responsibilities and monitoring to the REDSOs backstopping these missions. In the Southern Africa region a USAID Regional Office has just been established in Gaborone, Botswana. Among its

Bar graph not included in electronic file.

responsibilities will be the administration of regional projects in such fields as Democratic Governance, Conflict Resolution and Labor Relations, all major areas of emphasis in Phase II of STRIDE undertakings.

There are discussions underway about ways in which a hiatus in the progress STRIDE has achieved can be avoided, so that regional projects can eventually be engaged in Swaziland. Reportedly there are activities in other bilateral programs in the Southern Africa region (Lesotho, Botswana) which will be accommodated in this manner, or which will be continued as a bi-lateral activity with monitoring from the Southern Africa Regional Office. The scope, uniqueness and momentum of the activities which STRIDE has pioneered should merit the same consideration.

Section 2 -- Findings

2.1. Project Implementation

2.1.1 USAID Supervision

The Contractor (Aurora Associates, Intl.,Inc) carried out the everyday operational functions and maintained the reporting systems for STRIDE activities. USAID/Swaziland maintained close monitoring and oversight of Aurora's activities, particularly in the wake of the shift of emphasis beginning in early 1994. This assured close coordination with the USAID-administered portion of the STRIDE Project. The USAID Officers having responsibility for the project appear to have had a good collaborative working relationship with the different AURORA Chiefs-of-Party throughout the life of this activity.

Each USAID Officer responsible for the STRIDE Project participated in the deliberations and represented USAID at all of the regular meetings of the STRIDE Steering Committee. The USAID Project Officer (FSN) in charge during most of the past three years departed post in late January 1996. Her contributions, particularly her insights into the priorities of the GOS and trends in the private sector, plus the excellent working relationships she developed with other members of the Steering Committee, were major contributions to the success of this undertaking. Her responsibilities were assumed by the Acting Chief of the Project and General Development Office who has responsibility for all remaining project activities in the current phase-out mode of the USAID Mission to Swaziland.

The Annual Work Plans drafted by the Aurora Chief-of-Party and approved by the STRIDE Steering Committee, including the USAID Officer on this committee, were then reviewed by the Acting USAID Director. The USAID Director was briefed periodically on STRIDE activities underway and kept advised of progress and problems of those in a planning stage. The regular activity reports were all submitted as required under the USAID contract with AURORA for review by the USAID Mission.

The foregoing arrangements made for close coordination between the Aurora Contract activities with those STRIDE activities administered by USAID/Swaziland. The USAID Acting Director redirected local institutional support from UNISWA and SCOT to BMEP/Lulote, SIMPA and the SGBT. He also redirected the training of local officials component from traditional chiefs to newly elected officials, creating a series of workshops conducted by the International City/County Management Association for the GOS Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. With STRIDE funding he coordinated joint undertakings with USIS; with the Embassy's 116(e) Democratic Governance Fund; and with RUDHO/SA.

Each activity in the rather broad spectrum undertaken since the STRIDE Project's shift of emphasis was scrutinized for its relevance to USAID's Strategic Objectives. As a result, despite the variety of training courses, workshops and seminars designed, solicited and undertaken within Swaziland and the region, all were approved by the USAID as supportive of its Strategic Objective No. 2 as set forth in the last Country Development Strategy Statement (CDSS submitted in 1993), and as outlined in the last

Assessment of Program Impact (API) of March 1995, namely, "Increase the number of Swazis who effectively direct, manage and participate in national development".

2.1.2 Contractor Management

Aurora Associates International, Inc. has been the Contractor for the STRIDE Project since its initiation in 1990 to the present time. Its management of this activity from its Washington headquarters and from its field office can be assessed according to the two distinct phases of the STRIDE Project:

1. Phase I: from inception through the Mid-Term Evaluation in November 1993, when STRIDE was in the more traditional USAID Training Project Mode with concentration of resources on long-term U.S. academic training, and when backstopping of such trainees was a major contract function;
2. Phase II: from early 1994 to the present when STRIDE intensified in-country and regional 3rd country training of ranking members of the government, private sector associations and labor federations in a major effort to bring awareness, attitudinal changes, mutual appreciation of respective roles, and broadened perspectives of political, economic and social factors in national dialogues.

It should also be noted that during Phase I Aurora was requested to undertake the backstopping of all of the participants for training in the U.S. under the Swaziland Manpower Development Project 645-0218 (SWAMDP) which had a PACD of June 28, 1994. In all Aurora undertook the backstopping of 55 SWAMDP-financed participants, more than the number being handled under STRIDE. Most of the SWAMDP participants were already in the U. S. when the STRIDE Project started, and the last returned to Swaziland in June 1994.

Under Amendment No. 14 of March 14, 1994 to the USAID Contract with Aurora initiated on October 16, 1990, the Aurora Home Office in Washington D.C. provides 30% of the time of a mid-level professional training officer; 40% time of a program/placement officer; and 30% time from a secretary. This represented a reduction in the level of effort required of the Aurora Home Office in concurrence with the shift of emphasis from L/T U. S. academic training to in-country and regional training. Under subsequent amendments with the closing date of the Aurora Field Office operations under the contract extended to July 31, 1996, a total of 111.6 person months is to be provided by the foregoing Aurora Home Office Staff.

The U. S. academic training backstopped under the contract was modified under Amendment No. 19 of May 16, 1996 from 54 to 52 participants, consisting of 9 B.A.'s; 42 M.A.'s, and 1 Ph.D. This reflected funds for the 53rd scholarship being utilized instead to finance the completion of study of 3 on-going SWAMDP participants, and that one STRIDE-nominated candidate had to withdraw at the last minute for personal reasons. (After expiration of the SWAMDP PACD on June 30, 1994, the remainder of the training of four of the original fifty-five SWAMDP participants - 2 Ph.D's; 1 M.A., and 1 B.S. was assumed by STRIDE). As of March 31, 1996, 18 L/T trainees remained in the U. S., with the last of these

scheduled to return in early 1997. The Project Activity Completion Date (PACD) is May 31, 1997 to allow sufficient time for the return of all participants and final payments of total costs incurred.

The overall backstopping by the Aurora Home Office appears exemplary judging from the measures implemented and the achievements attained. Notable among these were:

- < Close scrutiny of the goals of the participant and the curricula of the possible institutions to be utilized to insure a match;
- < Installation of a toll-free 800 number for all participants to call the Aurora Home Office at any time they had problems or questions;
- < Contacting the faculty advisors of every participant each time the quarterly academic reports were received to assure the school was meeting the participants expectations, the participants were meeting academic standards, and exploring what could be done if such was not the case.
- < Going to the campus to confer with participants and their academic advisors as and when problems came into focus;
- < Circulating a monthly newsletter among participants with articles from Swaziland newspapers gathered by the Aurora office in Mbabane;
- < Utilizing only schools in state university systems to get the best bargain for the tuition paid, and then bettering this arrangement by negotiating with the school in question to have the Swazi participants accorded the same tuition as state residents;
- < Having an average rate of course completion within 80% of the time originally planned.
- < Achieving 15.66% placement of participants in HBCUs.

With the shift in STRIDE Project emphasis beginning in early 1994, the Aurora Field Office in Mbabane became the principal locus of STRIDE Project activities. Data collected and interviews conducted with a random sampling of those participating and benefiting from the training courses, workshops and seminars undertaken, indicate that the performance of the Aurora Field Office has exceeded all expectations.

The Aurora Field Office Chief-of-Party has had to exercise in-depth analytical abilities in deciphering the complexities of the political, economic and social factors that are paramount in influencing decision making and policy formulation in Swaziland. Such analysis included identifying the principals in the GOS, the private sector and labor who could play key roles in acting decisively on key issues. Then, after having gained the trust of all concerned as an objective and neutral professional, he had the STRIDE office serve as a catalyst in selecting joint training of representatives from all groups concerned with major issues as a forum for initiating dialogue and understandings between parties where these did not exist.

The performance of the present STRIDE Chief-of-Party, as well as that of his predecessor, has been characterized by a commendable degree of multi-disciplinary professionalism seldom encountered; profound analytical abilities; a high-degree of creativity in finding the best training available in responding

to problems and situations requiring immediate attention as these came into focus; and honesty and integrity in their negotiations and planning which gained the respect, confidence and friendship of all in Swaziland who have dealt with the STRIDE Project.

The Aurora Field Office Chief-of-Party has accomplished a prodigious amount of work in the scheduling of training, selection of trainees, assuring that the courses were finely-tuned to impart just what was expected and needed, and doing immediate follow-up evaluations as a basis for planning the next step in bringing about attitudinal changes, broadening perspectives, and encouraging mutual appreciation of the respective roles and interests of parties who previously were protagonists.

There were found to be two factors in contractor performance which weighed negatively in planning of training activities and in the follow-on of L/T participants. The first was the continuing tendency of the Aurora Home Office to be overly conservative in its projection of funding needed to complete academic training. During one six-month period, this practice reportedly resulted in the perception in the Field Office and in the STRIDE Steering Committee of insufficient funds being available for in-country and regional training, thereby bringing about an artificial slowdown of these. The second factor was the lack of progress in fostering a strong USAID alumni association which apparently the previous SWAMDP contractor also failed to develop despite intensive efforts.

There were also two incidents of fraud reported on the part of local employees in the STRIDE Field Office during the past six years, one of which might have been discovered earlier than was the case through closer periodic scrutiny of accounting records. Both cases were reported to local authorities, and are still pending in court.

2.1.3 STRIDE Steering Committee

Since the inception of the STRIDE Project, its Steering Committee has functioned objectively, fairly and professionally. This characterized its selection of long and short-term participants during the first years of STRIDE, and has continued following the shift of emphasis from traditional academic and specialized training to in-country and regional short term training, seminars and workshops. Its membership has always comprised representatives of the GOS Ministry of Labor and Public Service; the Federation of Swaziland Employers; the Swaziland Private Sector; the USAID Mission; and the Aurora Field Office Chief-of-Party with a member of his staff to serve as recorder. There was to have been a representative from Community Development since training of traditional leaders was to have been one of the three principal areas of activity of the STRIDE Project during its first three years; the persistent absence of any CD representative manifested the lack of interest in such training, and this facet of the project was shifted to training of newly elected local officials following the Mid-Term Evaluation.

A review of the minutes of the monthly meetings of the STRIDE Steering Committee during the past two years shows that discussions were forthright and exchanges of views were frank. Except for the absent representative from Community Development, and the departure of the former USAID STRIDE Project

Officer from post in January 1996, most of the initial Steering Committee members have remained throughout this project. It is apparent that the proceedings of the Steering Committee were conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect for individual interests and points of view which has developed over the years.

The STRIDE Steering Committee established a noteworthy record during its first three years of selection of long and short-term participants. All training applications on the format prescribed by the Committee were closely scrutinized as to how the training would be utilized in benefiting the company or government department, and then all candidates personally interviewed. There were no drop-outs (one participant selected did not depart for personal reasons), and all returned to the positions intended or new ones created to capitalize on their newly acquired skills. The eighteen L/T participants still completing their courses in the U.S. at the time of this evaluation give every indication of maintaining this record.

Following the shift in project emphasis in 1994, the Aurora Chief-of-Party usually took the initiative in proposing short-term courses, seminars and workshops deemed instrumental in focusing on critical issues as these came into focus. The Steering Committee representatives from government and the private sector would sometimes outline potential problems emerging, and the Aurora Chief-of-Party would undertake the research and contacts to find either a program or seminar already designed to address such problems, or he would request that such be designed. These would then be fine-tuned by the Steering Committee to assure that they were responsive to the political/social/economic environment of Swaziland.

Again, judging from the evaluation questionnaires submitted at the completion of these undertakings, the proceedings of the meetings to assess just how valuable they were, and the responses in the random sampling of participants made in the course of this evaluation, the STRIDE Steering Committee has maintained its reputation in having provided courses/seminars/workshops deemed highly instructive and relevant.

2.1.4 Activities Underway Final Phase

As noted, all of the Long-Term academic participants funded under the 1st Phase of the STRIDE Project have successfully completed, or are in the course of successfully completing their studies. The last of those still remaining in the United States at this time is scheduled to return during the first quarter of CY1997.

What has characterized the 2nd Phase of the STRIDE project, particularly its last 18 months, has been the momentum attained in the number, scope and expanded participation in the In-Country and External Short-Term training courses, seminars and workshops scheduled. The refocus of STRIDE resources in Democratic Governance by supporting training and consulting on industrial relations topics and on Parliament, and its refocus within the local institutions component by strengthening the curriculum of the Business Management Extension Program (BMEP), required an exploratory period of defining and refining the interests and areas of disagreement of the government, private sector, and labor entities involved. The initial STRIDE undertakings were instrumental in providing fora, in some instances the very first, in which

perceptions and underlying animosities could be freely discussed in a non-threatening environment. Once this process got underway and new understandings among participants came into being, the requests to and from the Steering Committee multiplied. Many of the attendees interviewed in the course of this evaluation felt that the process of carefully selecting those who were to attend training programs, and the rules by which topics were presented and discussed openly, proved to be as important as the information conveyed.

In 1991 In-Country Training got underway, and through the first quarter of 1996 there were 202 courses/seminars/workshops conducted under STRIDE sponsorship, which resulted in the following number of persons trained:

1.....	1991
891.....	1992
880.....	1993
855.....	1994
1792.....	1995
133.....	1996 (1st Qtr)

The 19 courses/seminars/workshops offered in 1994 were the first initiated under the revised Democratic Governance shift of emphasis in the STRIDE Project as modified by the USAID Mission. They were exploratory by nature with a new audience being addressed, and as such were limited in number during this period when new understandings and perceptions were coming about.

The recent momentum attained by STRIDE is also evidenced clearly in the rate of increase in External Short-Term Training provided to individuals:

11.....	1992
9.....	1993
44.....	1994
156.....	1995*
70.....	1996 (1st Qtr)

* 75% of these External Short-Term trainees attended seminars/workshops/courses in the Republic of South Africa which the STRIDE Steering Committee found to be ideally suited to the needs of particular groups. As noted in the Background Section of this Evaluation, the Republic of South Africa is concerned with many of the same critical issues as Swaziland (i.e. Drafting of a New Constitution; Functions of the New Parliament; a New Labor Relations Act; Establishing New

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Bar Graph not included in file.

Standards in the Educational System, etc.) and at the moment is well ahead of Swaziland in the drafting and discussion of these matters. Most of those interviewed in the course of this evaluation felt that, given the proximity, similarities in goals, and relationships of these two countries, there was much that could be learned from South Africa. Within the remaining 25% of STRIDE External Short-Term participants, 15% attended courses in the U.S.; 9% attended courses and seminars in Kenya, with the balance attending programs in Botswana, Israel, Malawi, Mauritius, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Illustrative of the nature, scope and volume of STRIDE activities now underway are those approved at the April 1996 Steering Committee Meeting. All of these activities are to be completed prior to July 31, 1996 when the STRIDE Project Office in Mbabane is currently scheduled to close. It is readily apparent that this scheduled closure of STRIDE activities unfortunately coincides with the project's reaching its peak volume of undertakings in Democratic Governance, Labor Relations and Conflict Resolution. The scope of activities reflects the ongoing needs of the three principal players in this process - the GOS, the private sector and labor federations. Such an abrupt conclusion of STRIDE-sponsored activities at this juncture would effectively terminate the only existing mechanism now providing the wherewithal for dialogues, understandings and modernization at a time when these are just beginning to have perceptible results.

U. S. Short-Term Training

Infrastructure Investment and Financial Analysis for Urban Planners, IPPP, Washington D.C.

Regional Short-Term Training

Strategic Planning Training for Councillors and Urban Government Officials, Johannesburg, RSA.

First Tripartite Meeting of the SADC Employment and Labour Sector, Lilongwe, Malawi. Constitutional Assembly Observation Visit, Parliament of South Africa, Capetown, RSA.

Manage Workforce Transformation & Democratization Conference, Midrand, RSA.

Labour Arbitration Workshop, Pretoria, RSA

Advanced Conflict Resolution; Understanding Conflict, Cape Town, RSA.

Advanced Training for the Competency Based Trainer, Johannesburg, RSA.

Retirement Fund Administration, Sandton, RSA.

Africa Connect Conference, Midrand, RSA.

In-Country Training

Workshop on the draft of the New Urban Government Bill.

East, Central and Southern Africa Employers' Conference.

Workshop for the Governance and Public Sector Management Committee of the National Development Strategy.

Workshops on the Industrial Relations Act No. 1 of 1996.

Workshops for Swaziland Transport & Allied Workers Union Shop Stewards.

Productivity Improvement

Managing People

Supervisory Skills for Accountants and Role of the Finance Manager.

Democracy in the Workplace: Building Organizations on Merit and Participatory Action.

Consultancies

Education and Training Standards in Swaziland.

2.1.5 Funding and Expenditures

The Swaziland Training and Institutional Development (STRIDE) Project Agreement (645-0231), signed May 31, 1990, authorized \$10,000,000 in grant funds to be utilized over a six year period. The GOS was to contribute the equivalent of \$3,340,000 in cash, services and in-kind over the same period.

The greater portion of the USAID contribution was to finance a contractor to provide Home and Field Office Support, Technical Assistance, and arrange and facilitate the training and institutional strengthening and collaboration under this project.

Aurora Associates, Inc. was awarded this principal STRIDE contract on October 16, 1990. USAID then undertook a cooperative agreement with the California Polytechnic University (Cal Poly), Pomona, CA, Faculty of Business, to undertake part of the Institutional Strengthening component of this project.

Amendment No. 1 to the STRIDE Project was signed on June 16, 1992 increasing the USAID grant funding of this project by \$1,310,000 to \$11,310,000 (this total commitment amount was subsequently reduced by \$296,133 to offset mutually agreed GOS obligations). The additional funding was necessitated

largely by increases in tuition costs averaging 13% annually during the first two years of STRIDE financed L/T training. The amendment increased the number of academic scholarships in the L/T participant category to 54, and allowed participant selection to continue into 1995. This amendment also increased the GOS contribution by \$2,322,042 to \$5,662,042. The total project cost as then amended was \$16,972,040. The PACD of this project remained May 31, 1997, and the contract with Aurora Associates was amended to allow an option for extension to May 1, 1997 without additional competition to manage the participant training program for the final two years of this project.

Almost 78% of the USAID contribution to this project (\$8,555,809) was budgeted for funding the contract with Aurora Associates; 50% (\$4,292,908) of this latter amount has been expended on training costs thus far. The remaining 22% of the USAID contribution (\$2,458,058) was committed to underwrite the USAID cooperative agreement with Cal Polytechnic University for GOS institutional strengthening, to fund USAID-administered technical assistance and training, and to purchase vehicles, computers and office equipment.

All GOS contributions required under the STRIDE ProAg have been made in a timely manner throughout the course of this project. These are paid into the GOS Training Trust Fund which administers participatory contributions in all training activities with USAID and the other members of the donor community. Using the original exchange rate between the \$U.S./Lilangeni the GOS would appear to have exceeded its planned commitment of \$5,662,042 with a total contribution to date equivalent to \$7,509,076. However, even when making allowance for the recent fall of the Lilangeni (which is pegged to the South African Rand), the GOS has still met its financial commitment under this project. Moreover, given the expressed satisfaction which GOS officials have registered regarding the nature of current STRIDE activities, the same proportion of GOS support can be expected through the PACD, whatever their number and scope.

Based on the assumption that the STRIDE Field Office closes on July 31, 1996, estimates made comparing the current balance committed under the Aurora contract to estimated costs projected to contract completion on May 1, 1997, indicate a balance in excess of \$350,000 remaining in the contract pipeline a/o that date. Also, the USAID/Swaziland STRIDE Financial Management Plan indicates a balance of \$265,705 remaining unprogrammed as of May 6, 1996 within the USAID administered component of the STRIDE Project. While there are still some AOCs expected, a sizeable proportion of this amount should still remain after these are liquidated.

The foregoing analysis indicates there are sufficient uncommitted funds authorized under the STRIDE Project for the Aurora Associates field office in Mbabane to remain and to maintain almost the present scale of 3rd Country and In-Country Training operations until May 1, 1997. During that interval the USAID Regional Office in Gaborone will be initiating or expanding its portfolio of regional projects which appear to address the same types of activities STRIDE has initiated in Swaziland during the last eighteen months. Among these are the Southern Africa Regional Democracy Fund; the Southern Africa Conflict Resolution Project; the Southern Africa Labor Relations Project.

Swaziland is included among the eleven nations in this region as a potential beneficiary of such regional undertakings. Allowing current contract activities to continue until May 1, 1997 can be done without extending the contract or the STRIDE PACD. This would allow a planned and gradual phase-out of bilateral activities to coincide with the phase-in of their regional counterparts, thereby avoiding any hiatus in responding to the pace of STRIDE interventions now being requested.

An abrupt interruption of Democracy Governance activities is at the very least awkward, and more often damaging in undertakings of this nature. In the absence of a USAID Mission and with a reduced staff in the U. S. Embassy, the STRIDE office could help the RCSA explore opportunities for D/G activities in Swaziland, as well as assist in the writing of proposals whereby Swazi NGOs might qualify for funding and linkages with regional NGO counterparts. Such a continuation would obviate the need for USAID's regional projects to undergo having to reestablish relationships with the principal Swazi personnel who have made STRIDE initiatives so successful in governance, conflict resolution and labor relations. It should allow regional activities to rapidly come on stream in Swaziland by moving into a schedule already prepared for them by STRIDE.

2.2 Project Effectiveness

2.2.1 Validity of Assumptions underlying Project Logframe

The original STRIDE Project Logframe of the PROAG of May 31, 1990 was not modified in the course of this activity though the economic environment in Swaziland underwent a sea change and the traditional GOS political structure proved to be unyielding to changes which administrative efficiencies and modernization required. While the components in the original STRIDE Project Logframe remain unchanged, the shifts in strategy, target groups and outputs of this activity were accomplished through a series of amendments to the Aurora contract.

A number of the assumptions upon which the original logframe was predicated were overtaken by events not anticipated at time of signing. The estimate of the shortfall of 2000 Swazis qualified for administrative/managerial positions by 1997 appears to have been based on a projection of the 5% + economic growth rate Swaziland experienced during the last half of the eighties. Even before the end of 1991 economic indicators showed that such a rate of growth was not going to be maintained. Still, since this target figure included the replacement of expatriates in these positions along with allowance for new investments, it was not unreasonable.

The next assumption was that strengthening of local training institutions was the most effective method of meeting that shortfall and keep it from recurring. The two institutions selected were the Swaziland Institute of Technology (SCOT), with concentration on the accounting curriculum in its commercial faculty to produce Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) Level III Accountants, and the University of Swaziland (UNISWA) to strengthen its Bachelor of Commerce curriculum. USAID administered the Cooperative Agreement with California Polytechnic to undertake this institutional strengthening. Few

results of this linkage were noted when the specific evaluation requested by USAID/Swaziland was completed. The release of any of the 2nd Tranche of funding was contingent upon the results of that evaluation. Thereafter training of SCOT and UNISWA personnel was continued at a reduced level, and the local institution strengthening component remaining in the project logframe was shifted to other institutional entities on a more modest scale.

The assumption that the public sector would be receptive to new policies and procedures (introduced by L/T and S/T training) to foster private sector economic growth had two sub-components: administrative reform and community leader training. Administrative reform within the GOS was late in being implemented, and the principal vehicle to induce such reform is the Public Sector Management Program which STRIDE assisted in getting underway at the Swaziland Institute of Management and Public Administration (SIMPA). The series of twenty-two SIMPA seminars, in which all branches of the GOS were to participate, got underway in 1995. The resistance to administrative reform is still evident in many of the upper echelons of the GOS; the weakness of the assumption underlying the administrative reform component was that such could be induced on a broad basis by a relatively few key trained personnel. The assumption that traditional leaders would be receptive to training introducing modern administrative and managerial methods was only tested on a very limited scale since the representative from Community Development who was to serve on the STRIDE Steering Committee did not attend its meetings. The STRIDE Project is now training the relatively new echelon of locally elected council members to improve administration at the local level of community development.

2.2.2 End of Project Status (EOPS) Indicators

The following EOPS as set forth in the original ProAg still pertain:

Returned long-term participants will be qualified for promotion into leadership positions in private firms and GOS ministries.

As noted in the foregoing section of this evaluation on Project Implementation, this EOPS has been largely attained. Some participants have been promoted; others have returned too recently to have attained a higher status in their organizations. But all who received L/T training show such promise and so this EOPS should eventually be achieved, beyond the PACD.

Swazi middle and upper level public and private sector managers will be using improved financial, project and personnel management practices.

Judging from the titles of the positions of most trained under STRIDE, the majority of returned participants are in positions where they will be allowed innovation in applying skills learned. The sampling obtained by interviews with returned participants selected specifically to test realization of this EOPS confirms that the modern management and financial practices learned are being put to good use. For example STRIDE-trained personnel within the Central Bank have implemented systems learned which assure payments of

billings and payrolls on schedule, where previously this had not been the case. The STRIDE participant doing project analysis for the Swaziland Industrial Development Center is using project feasibility analysis techniques learned during his training and will be initiating a division for project monitoring also using new methods learned. Within the Swaziland Posts and Telecommunications Corporation, the STRIDE-trained participant, who was serving as Acting Director when interviewed, is implementing a management information system acquired during his training at A.D. Little which will allow strategic planning within its operations for the first time. The Director of the Swaziland Business Growth Trust attributes his having been able to introduce such innovations as improvements in that institution's micro-banking and smart cards to what he learned during his STRIDE-financed L/T and S/T training in the U.S.

These are but a few examples gained through interviews; the titles held by the others in both public and private sectors indicate that they also are in positions to be able to put their new skills into practice.

UNISWA and SCOT will be producing more and better qualified graduates in accounting and business management.

As noted, the training of faculty personnel at these two institutions has continued although the role either will play in upgrading professional standards is still open to question. It was noted that most of the students at SCOT have their tuition paid by the companies employing them which would certainly indicate that the courses taught are deemed worthwhile by the private sector.

New and revised administrative policies and procedures in selected public institutions will foster private sector development.

The Swaziland Institute of Management and Public Administration (SIMPA) is now funding the Public Sector Management Program designed to analyze the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of ministries and departments within the government, with priority accorded those serving the private sector. The series of 22 SIMPA-conducted workshops underway in carrying out the initial phase of this assignment are based upon Management and Information Systems introduced at SIMPA through STRIDE seminars and workshops. SIMPA's linkage with Technikon SA, established through the STRIDE Project, is recent but seems promising. SIMPA is not recognized as the focal point of all Public Service training and there will be an effort to revive a bill in the Parliament which accords it autonomy as a parastatal.

Since the STRIDE-sponsored training at SIMPA took place less than one year ago, and because those in the public sectors now benefiting from the SIMPA training have had limited time to put their learning into practice, the overall effects are not yet perceived.

Traditional leaders will actively promote policies and activities that facilitate economic development in their communities.

This component of the STRIDE Project was discontinued following its Mid-Term Evaluation because of non-attendance of the Community Development representative at the STRIDE Steering Committee meetings and little interest shown by the ministry concerned. According STRIDE training to facilitate economic development at the local level has shifted to address newly elected councilors.

2.2.3 Results of Interviews/Surveys Conducted

Interviews were conducted and discussions were held with thirty persons in Mbabane, Manzini and Matsapha who were either directly involved with the STRIDE Project as trainees, employers, officials of institutions, enterprises and government departments, or representatives of associations and unions participating in or benefiting from STRIDE's activities. An effort was made to obtain as representative a sampling as possible within the time constraints and availabilities of mostly senior personnel. Interviews were held with 3 L/T U.S. participants, 2 S/T U.S. participants, and 4 IC participants from Phase I of STRIDE (1990 - 93); 3 U.S. L/T, 1 U.S. S/T, 12 3rd Country and 15 In-Country trainees from Phase II (1994 - 96) of this activity; and 4 employers, in both phases selecting employees and employers representing the government and private sectors. Most of those selected for interviews had participated in more than one STRIDE-sponsored training activity, thereby allowing them to provide a broader perspective of the quality of training and what was derived from it.

Examples of the questionnaires used for Employees and Employers benefiting from STRIDE training and technical assistance are found as Annex F. As the format indicates, the impact methodology originated by Donald Kirkpatrick and refined by G/HCD/FSTA and AMEX, Intl., was utilized. The questionnaire assesses the trainee's impression of the quality of training given; the acquisition of knowledge and skills imparted; performance following training; and perceptible results in efficiency and productivity within an institution or business, and if possible, beyond.

The overall results compiled from interviews and discussions with those benefiting, as well as with those observing the effects brought about by the STRIDE Project, constitute a ringing endorsement. There was little variation by sector in the views expressed by employees and employers for the training conducted in both Phase I and Phase II of this project. Most accolades were given the In-Country and 3rd Country Short-Term training conducted in Phase II, almost all of which was designed specifically to address emerging problems in the functioning and relationships of those three sectors.

Under Phase I of STRIDE, all but 15 of the total of 1,828 U.S. L/T, U.S. S/T, 3rd Country S/T, and In-Country trainees have completed their courses, and the remainder will do so by the end of the 1st quarter of 1997. Those who have returned are in the government or private organizations from which they were first recruited, many now in more senior positions as a result of this training. The sample interviewed verified the PTMS and other records maintained in the USAID and STRIDE Offices. Records also indicate that all are fulfilling the obligation of assuming the post-training responsibilities of their sponsoring organization which was incurred when they accepted STRIDE sponsored training. Reportedly there is a relatively high brain-drain of senior personnel from Swaziland to South Africa, but so far it appears that only

one returned U.S. participant is now working outside of Swaziland, she having been transferred to the South African branch of the private firm originally sponsoring her.

Phase II of STRIDE has been characterized by the shift in strategy and sectors of emphasis derived in part from the Mid-Term Evaluation of this activity in November 1993, as well as by USAID's reassessment of the causes and implications of declining indicators and trends characterizing the Swazi economy. This deteriorating domestic situation required a more rapid training response as underlying causes were identified. The STRIDE Project was adapted as the vehicle to convey state-of-the-art knowledge through seminars/workshops/conferences/observation tours, all to be of short duration since senior officials and executives from the private sector, labor unions and government were the target audience, and could spare little time from their schedules.

The evaluations which were held immediately following these training events indicate for the most part a high degree of quality of the trainer/facilitators conducting them, as well as the relevance of the training received. This shows that the same qualitative inputs and scrutiny which characterized the selection of training candidates by the STRIDE Steering Committee in Phase I of this project, was also applied to its review of proposed programs and selection of its Phase II courses. The committee's membership, composed of representatives of the GOS and private industry, assured a balanced airing and analysis of their respective positions and views. Likewise the Steering Committee's selection of those participating in observation tours and workshops was done with a view of assuring that representatives from all sectors would benefit.

The sampling of those attending Phase II training events under STRIDE auspices confirmed what an analysis of the records in USAID and STRIDE Offices indicated. These short-term sessions, particularly those designed to promote understandings and dialogues between government, labor and the private sector, were the most effective vehicles in Swaziland for broadening the perspectives of creating a mutuality of purpose. As higher levels of understanding were reached, each subsequent training event built upon those preceding it.

There could be no better examples to illustrate the foregoing point than the STRIDE-sponsored workshop convened on May 2, 1996 attended by officials from management and labor who had been adversaries 18 months previously. Discussions at this conference culminated with a "Vision Statement" signed by senior officials from the Federation of Swaziland Employers (FSE), the Swaziland Federation of Labor (SFL), and the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU). This statement (ANNEX H) appeared in a full-page ad in the May 5, Sunday edition of the Times of Swaziland. The beginnings of this dialogue can be traced to the initial STRIDE Tripartite forum when the three officials signing this final document held their first frank and open discussions on industrial relations. Most importantly in the evolution of this dialogue, its sponsorship by STRIDE has never been viewed as fostering U.S. intervention. The same can be said of all STRIDE Project activities.

Along with the foregoing ad in the May 5, 1996 Sunday-edition of Times of Swaziland, there appeared the announcement of the Third Conference on National Education and Training Standards in Swaziland starting

on May 9, 1996, as the STRIDE-sponsored follow-up to work begun in the previous two STRIDE conferences on this subject. For each of these STRIDE invited Professor Ian Bellis, the principal architect of revised standards in South Africa, to lead discussions. This third conference coincides with the final drafting of the work of the Education & Training Sub-Committee of the National Development Strategy Initiative (NDS) of Swaziland. These STRIDE Conferences, attended by 60 - 100 stakeholders from labor unions, business and government, and attended by members of the NDS Education & Training Sub-Committee of the National Development Strategy Planning Commission, have facilitated much needed public dialogue which has been of great value in the work of this Sub-Committee.

These two examples, which took place in the course of this evaluation, are the continuation of the series of such STRIDE-sponsored workshops/conferences/seminars/observation tours held in these and other domains. There have been varying rates of progress in all the sectors addressed by STRIDE. Much of the impact of Phase II of this activity is seen in the new values and more sophisticated perspectives gained by those attending, many of which are still in the process of being transcribed into policies and programs at the central government level. Much of the process itself can be attributed to STRIDE, for most of the dialogue and understandings now prescribing national policies and programs originated in earlier STRIDE-sponsored events and the careful selection of their participants.

NOTABLE QUOTATIONS FROM INTERVIEWS

SIDC: "STRIDE is making a definite positive impact on the skills of the country - first on the government sector, and now on the private sector."

LUWATI CENTER: "All of the progress recently made in the development of TRAINING a national dialogue may be lost if STRIDE should CENTER close."

SFTU: "Unions have lack of training to interact - they are only confrontational; now STRIDE is providing that ability."

SIMPA: "It is frightening to hear that the STRIDE Project is coming to an end. The very idea of local government is new, and it is not yet connected to the central government."

SNACS: "Before STRIDE people were even afraid of thinking about their rights. The awareness raised among leaders now must be expanded to the grass roots level."

SNACS: "No organization other than STRIDE could have raised the awareness as has been done".

SNAT: "Before participation in the STRIDE workshops, there were profound differences in the posturing and positions of SNAT and government officials. We now tend to have the same understandings which make negotiations easier".

SFTU: "If STRIDE has to fade, let it fade gradually. Thanks to STRIDE, we now have employers and employees conducting a dialogue."

BMEP: "As a result of the competency-based training received by BMEP trainers under the auspices of STRIDE, we have improved our curriculum."

SBGT: "The real impact of STRIDE is bringing the private sector and government to the realization that they can work together".

CENTRAL: "STRIDE technical assistance provided a professional BANK needs assessment of training required. Though first resisted by the senior staff, it is now the cornerstone of the restructuring underway."

TOWN: "Town Councillors are new in the field of local COUNCILLOR government. STRIDE training has been very beneficial - it will enable them to prepare for and deal with a rapidly changing environment".

2.2.4 STRIDE Training Support of USAID Strategic Objectives

As noted, at USAID/W's request, there has been no recent updating of the USAID Swaziland CDSS (1991-1995) nor has there been an updated CPSP within the last three years to redefine how the shift in STRIDE strategy and target groups supports Strategic Objectives. The last USAID/Swaziland Assessment of Program Impact (API) Report was for FY1994. That API had as the Country Program Goal, "To Expand Swaziland's Accelerating Economic Growth into a process of Equitable and Sustainable Development that enhances the Quality of Life for all Swazis". Three Strategic Objectives (SOs) were cited as contributing to that goal, the second of which was: "Increase the number of Swazis who effectively direct, manage and participate in national development". STRIDE is described within the API as the principal USAID activity to achieve this 2nd Strategic Objective.

The API listed three areas chosen for concentration of training resources under STRIDE in the belief that these would have the greatest potential impact. These are:

- < Training of the recently elected parliamentarians.
- < Working with and facilitating a tripartite group comprising labor, employers and parliament, for joint training in conflict resolution and economic planning.
- < Strengthening the capacity of the Business Management Extension Center to train new entrepreneurs.

All three of the foregoing areas of concentration were reiterated in the Action Memorandum approved by the USAID Director on September 14, 1994 (ANNEX C) which outlined the revised training targets and shifts in funding to achieve these within the STRIDE Project. All have been targeted for emphasis in the training activities conducted by STRIDE during the past eighteen months.

2.2.5 Overall Impact

The Scope of this Evaluation requested the team to examine specifically the following factors:

Progress in achieving End-of-Project Status Indicators at the output, purpose and goal levels.

The overall goal initially specified in the STRIDE ProAg was to strengthen SWAZI direction of and participation in the economic growth process. The Program Sub-Goal in the Objective Tree of USAID/Swaziland, last formulated in November 1991 and of which the STRIDE Project was to be supportive, is: "Increase Employment Generated by the Swazi-Owned and/or Managed Sector of the Economy". At that time the overall program goal was set in the context of "Swaziland's Accelerating Economic Growth", the forthcoming downturn was not yet apparent.

The STRIDE Project has undoubtedly strengthened Swazi participation in the economic growth process, both in the dialogues it has pioneered between the private, labor and government sectors, and through the institutions which now train, assist and provide capital to small and medium Swazi entrepreneurs. Set against the Illustrative Table of Indicators used in the methodology of this evaluation (Table I), those receiving L/T training under Phase I of STRIDE are moving from the stage of intermediate results within their institutions to the stage of broader sectoral impact supportive of this project's goal. Such progression usually takes 2 -3 years in the wake of L/T training. The Output of L/T participants was altered only slightly from 52 to 56; all appear to be on track in realizing the total project impact intended for them.

Purpose and outputs of the STRIDE Project underwent modification in the aforementioned internal USAID Action Memorandum of September 14, 1994. Since that time the output levels of both In-Country and 3rd Country S/T training have been modified as responses to new opportunities were implemented. Many of these came about through initiatives of the Aurora Chief-of-Party in Swaziland, others through the relationships he has established within the Swazi community of business, labor and government leaders. All were scrutinized and approved by the STRIDE Steering Committee.

The project's effectiveness in making a meaningful linkage between long-term training, external short term training, in-country training, and external short term technical assistance.

A good proportion of the external S/T training has provided the basis for reinforcing conferences, seminars, and workshops held in-country. For instance, after the Creating Partnerships (#3 below) conference held in Mbabane in October 1994, STRIDE began sending tripartite delegations to attend a one-week Industrial Relations course in South Africa (#5, 6, 8 below). After the historic in-country Tripartite Forum conducted in August 1995 (#7), the project sent two large delegations to conferences dealing with union and management relations (#9 & 10 below).

The same strategy was used in promoting an examination of education and training in Swaziland. Conferences in South Africa such as the one on Competency-Based HR Development (#20 below), and the IPM Convention on Competitiveness and HR Development (#21 below), followed on the themes introduced by Professor Bellis at the previous in-country conferences and were used to motivate and further

educate the Working Groups formed at the end of the Second National Conference. These regional programs were followed by an in-country review and synthesis meeting (# 22).

The pattern of alternating 2-3 day conferences

in the region with in-country training events was followed in governance and business training as well.

LINKAGES AMONG U.S., THIRD COUNTRY, & IN-COUNTRY TRAINING

Industrial Relations

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. 15-27 Jan 1994
<i>ILO Conference (in Mauritius)</i>
<i>Exec. Director of Federation of Swaziland Employers and Secretary-General of Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions</i></p> <p>2. 24-25 August 1994
<i>Conference on Labor Law, Human Rights, and Industrial Relations (in SA)</i>
<i>98 people from Parliament, Min of Labor, labor unions, media, business</i></p> <p>3. 6-7 October 1994
<i>Creating Partnerships Conference (in Swaziland)</i>
<i>Led by Pat McLagen & Christo Nel from SA</i>
<i>98 people from Parliament, government, labor unions, businesses, media</i></p> <p>4. 26-28 February 1995
<i>Social Clause Workshop (in Swaziland)</i>
<i>45 people from Parliament, government, labor unions, business</i></p> <p>5. 6-10 March 1995
<i>Industrial Relations course (in SA)</i>
<i>One person from Industrial Court & one person from Labor Dept attend</i></p> <p>6. 25 June - 1 July 1995
<i>Industrial Relations course (in SA)</i>
<i>5 persons from labor unions, government, business attend</i></p> <p>7. 8-12/15-17 August 1995
<i>Tripartite Forum on IR Bill (in Swaziland)</i>
<i>Led by two mediation specialists from SA</i>
<i>17 senior representatives from labor unions, business, government</i></p> | <p>8. 23 August - 1 September 1995
<i>Industrial Relations course (in SA)</i>
<i>7 persons from labor unions, government, business</i></p> <p>9. 12-13 September 1995
<i>Conference on Union and Management Relations (in SA)</i>
<i>24 senior level persons from labor unions, government, business</i></p> <p>10. 26-28 September 1995
<i>Conference on Strategic Compensation (in SA)</i>
<i>15 persons from labor unions, government, business</i></p> <p>11. 17-20 October 1995
<i>Basic Mediation course (in SA)</i>
<i>4 people from government (Min of Labor, Labor Dept.)</i></p> <p>12. 22 October - 20 November 1995
<i>Women in Trade Unions course (in Israel)</i>
<i>3 women from Swaziland Federation of Labor</i></p> <p>13. 26-28 April 1996
<i>IR training for Shop Stewards (in Swaziland)</i>
<i>16 persons from Swaziland Railroad (course to be repeated three times)</i></p> <p>14. 2-5 May 1996
<i>Bipartite Economic Strategy Workshop (in Swaziland)</i>
<i>Led by trainers from Aurora/SA</i>
<i>24 senior representative from labor unions and business federation</i></p> <p>15. 11 May 1996
<i>Workshop on IR Act (in Swaziland)</i>
<i>30 mid-level managers & floor supervisors in business to attend (course to be repeated five times at different locations in the country)</i></p> |
|---|--|

Education & Training

16. 29 June 1995
Launch Conference on Education & Training (in Swaziland)
Led by Prof Ian Bellis from SA
60 persons from labor unions, business, Min of Labor
17. July and August 1995
Interviews of Stakeholders conducted by Bellis during four visits to Swaziland
18. 20 September 1995
Catch-up Conference for Ministry of Education (in Swaziland)
Led by Prof Ian Bellis
47 persons from Min of Education
19. 21 September 1995
Second National Conference (in Swaziland)
Led by Prof Ian Bellis
98 people attending from labor unions, business, Min of Education, Min of Labor, members of National Development Strategy Sub-Committee on Education & Training
Six Working Groups formed (3 groups led by STRIDE/SWAMDP LT graduates)
20. 18-20 October 1995
Competency-Based HR Conference (in SA)
23 people from the Working Groups
21. 23-25 October 1995
IPM Convention on Competitiveness & HR Development (in SA)
15 people from the Working Groups
22. 7 November 1995
Review & Synthesis Workshop (in Swaziland)
33 people who attended conferences on Competency-Based HR, IPM Convention on Competitiveness, and Strategic Compensation
23. 9 May 1996
Third National Conference (in Swaziland)
Led by Prof Ian Bellis
75 people to attend

Governance

24. 24-25 August 1994

Conference on Labor Law, Human Rights, and Industrial Relations (in SA)

9 people from Parliament, Min of Labor, labor unions, media, business

25. 4 October 1994
Review and Synthesis Meeting (in Swaziland)
6 people who attended the above conference
26. 12 February 1995
Scenario Workshop I (in Swaziland)
Led by Koosum Kaylan from SA
45 people from Parliament, labor unions, business, government
27. 20-22 February 1995
Budget Analysis Workshop (in Swaziland)
89 Parliamentarians
28. 29 April -3 June 1995
Role of Congress (in US)
Two Parliamentarians
29. 18-20 August 1995
Scenario Workshop II (in Swaziland)
Led by Koosum Kaylan from SA
23 people from Parliament, labor unions, business, government
30. 30 August - 18 November 1995
Public Sector Management Program (in Swaziland)
980 upper grade civil servants attend 22 workshops
39 civil service union leaders attend 1 workshop
31. 4-9 September 1995
Civil Service Reform in Africa (in SA)
Principal Secretary, Min. of Labor
32. 8-10 November 1995
Seminar on Cooperatives (in Swaziland)
25 Parliamentarians
33. 16-20 November 1995
Study Visit to Parliament of SA (in SA)
Clerk to Parliament
34. 20-21 November 1995
Conference on Restructuring Government (in SA)
40 people from civil service unions and PSMP ministry teams

35. 7-8 December 1995
Change Management Workshop (in Swaziland)
Led by James Forsum from SA
53 people from labor unions, government, business
 36. 14 March 1996
Urban Government Legislation Workshop (in Swaziland)
61 elected councilors and city/municipal officials
 37. 28-30 March 1996
Course in Financial Planning for Local Governments (in SA)
34 elected councilors and municipal officials
 38. 12-14 April 1996
NDS Sub-Committee on Governance Workshop (in Swaziland)
24 members from Parliament, business, labor unions, government
 39. 30 May - 1 June 1996
Course in Financial Planning for Local Governments (in SA)
35 elected councilors and city officials to attend
 40. 6-7 May 1996
Conference on Managing Transformation & Democratization (in SA)
29 persons, including all of NDS Sub-Committee on Governance
- Business and Banking
41. 30 April - 15 May 1994
Export Training (in Kenya)
5 business women from Business Women's Assoc. of Swaziland
 42. 28 May - 15 June 1994
Export Training (in Kenya)
5 business women from Business Women's Assoc. of Swaziland
 43. 18-28 June 1994
Export Training (in Kenya)
3 business women from WAS; 2 from Min of Commerce & Industry
 44. 18-19 October 1994
Course on Business Consulting Skills (in SA)
 45. 29 October 1994
Course on Funding Your Business (in South Africa)
2 Lulote/BMEP small business trainers/cconsultants
 46. 22 July - 6 August 1994
Export Training (in Kenya)
4 business women from Business Women's Association of Swaziland
 47. 7 - 11 August 1994
Course on winning in Business (in South Africa)
2 Lulote/BMEP small business trainers/consultants
 48. 21 -22 September 1994
Course on Funding Your Business (in South Africa)
1 Lulote/BMEP small business trainer/consultant
 49. 16 - 18 November 1994
Productivity Improvement (in Swaziland)
Led by Jim Collins from SA
50 mid-level managers from business
 50. 21 - 22 August 1995
Performance by Garry Whyte Associates from SA
18 senior Central Bank managers
 51. 23 -24 August 1995
Women in Business Workshop (in Swaziland)
44 business women from Business Women's Association of Swaziland
 52. 12 - 14 September 1995
Performance Management (in Swaziland)
Led by Garry Whyte Associates from SA
49 mid-level Central Bank managers and supervisors
 53. 28 - 29 September 1995
Performance Management (in Swaziland)
32 mid-level Central Bank managers and supervisors
 54. 2 - 3 October 1995
Performance Management (in Swaziland)
16 mid-level Central Bank managers and supervisors
 55. 25 - 28 October 1995
Performance Management (in Swaziland)
16 mid-level Central Bank managers and supervisors
 56. 27 October 1995
Performance Management (in Swaziland)

12 mid-level Central Bank managers and supervisors

57. *10 -12 April 1996*

*Competitive Advantage Through People (in Swaziland)
22 business and government representatives join a
regional conference hosted by Federation of Swaziland
Employers*

58. *23 March - 12 April 1996*

*Course on Financing Municipal Government (in US)
Coordinator of new World Bank project for Urban
Development Relationship between L/T, 3rd Country
and In-Country Training*

Given the large number of Swazis who have studied under previous USAID projects such as SWAMDP, it is not unreasonable to assume that many graduates of U.S. academic and S/T training programs have attended these STRIDE funded in-country and regional S/T training programs. In fact, several L/T alumni assumed leadership roles in the Working Groups formed after the Second National Conference on Education and Training Standards (# 19 above). As shown below in the sample of those interviewed and who completed questionnaires, there was frequent overlap between those who attended L/T academic training and those who attended S/T and in-country training.

Impact on targeted organizations (e.g. Parliament, BMEP/Lulote or Central Bank) and impact on systems (e.g. civil service), educational/training systems or industrial relations

Although many people were interviewed during the course of this evaluation, questionnaires were only given to a sample of 21 trainees who together represented a total of 98 and possibly more STRIDE training events.

Questionnaires were given to 6 persons who had attended STRIDE L/T training. Two of them worked in the Central Bank, one at SGBT, one at SPTC, one at SIDC, and one at SCOT.

The two STRIDE alumni at the Central Bank have been involved in the institutional development effort being conducted through Gary Whyte Associates. The tutor in automotive engineering at SCOT has been very involved in the education and training initiative. The individual at SGBT attended S/T training in the U.S. after joining the organization and becoming its Director. Only the person at SPTC has not attended any S/T or in-country training event sponsored by STRIDE.

Individuals, who were playing leadership roles in society and were very much involved in STRIDE funded regional S/T and in-country training, were interviewed and given a questionnaire as well. Three happened to be SWAMDP L/T graduates, demonstrating the effect of past of USAID investments in U.S. training.

Following the Kilpatrick framework adopted by the Evaluation Team, the following results were reported by those completing the questionnaire (Summarized in ANNEX G):

A. Quality of training:

All reported that the training provided was of high quality. 20 assessed their training experiences as excellent, and one assessed it as good.

B. Acquisition of skills:

90% reported that they had acquired specific skills and knowledge that were very useful and relevant to their work. One assessed the skills and knowledge acquired as good.

C. Impact on the participant:

81% rated the impact of training on their work performance and/or careers as excellent, and 19% found the training to have had some impact in this regard. Most of the L/T participants have been upgraded in their jobs.

D. Impact on the institution/firm:

The five employers completing questionnaires (SIMPA, Lulote/BMEP, Central Bank, Usutu Pulp, Swazi Dairy Board) reported that those trained under STRIDE have shown significant improvements in performance which, in turn, have resulted in improved institutional operations. For example, Lulote/BMEP trainers are applying new consulting skills and concepts attained during S/T training at WITS in South Africa. SIMPA staff have become far more conversant in public sector management and urban government issues as a result of their involvement in the STRIDE funded Public Sector Management Program and the training of elected councilors.

E. End Results: Impact on sector/country:

The interviews and questionnaires solicited views about the perceived impact of STRIDE training at the sectoral or national level.

1. Industrial Relations

Results in this area of STRIDE intervention during the past two years have been the most dramatic. Respondents noted greatly improved bipartite relations between organized labor and business who were once antagonists. During the course of the evaluation, a bipartite vision statement was created during a STRIDE workshop. The statement was published in one of the major newspapers in the country as a pledge to the nation to work together toward industrial peace and prosperity.

2. Governance

With financial assistance from STRIDE, the Ministry of Labor and Public Service and SIMPA have been able to conduct 22 workshops under the Public Sector Management Program. This effort has been a very high profile activity and is frequently cited by Ministers as the tool for improving civil service performance and "slimming" the bureaucracy. It is too early for visible results from this large undertaking. However, the STRIDE funded PSMP has contributed to the building of capacity of SIMPA which is now positioned to take on increased responsibility for the anticipated restructuring of government.

Very recently STRIDE has supported in-country and regional training programs aimed at facilitating the work of the National Development Strategy (NDS) Sub-Committee on Governance and Public Sector Management. Because the topic is a very sensitive one at this particular juncture in Swaziland's political life, the sub-committee had never convened a meeting. However, with the King's recent endorsement of the NDS and his announcement that a constitution-creating process would be initiated, the sub-committee responded quickly and successfully sought STRIDE support to convene a planning workshop and to attend a conference in South Africa on democratization. Again, it is too early to see visible results, but STRIDE is assisting in setting in motion activities that will hopefully lead to positive results.

In February 1995 STRIDE funded a budgetary workshop conducted at SIMPA for the entire Parliament. Those respondents involved in this activity asserted that the level of budgetary debate in Parliament improved somewhat after the workshop.

Using STRIDE funds outside of the Aurora contract, USAID has been very much involved with urban government. In March 1995 councilors were elected for the first time, and the Mission seized the opportunity to provide voter education and train councilors and city/municipal officials. With the end of ICMA technical assistance in January 1996, the Aurora STRIDE office has continued building on this process by sponsoring in-country and regional S/T training. One of the elected councilors interviewed revealed that a national association is being formed in order to strengthen their role as elected officials.

3. Education and Training

The series of national level conferences led by Professor Bellis begun at SIMPA in June 1995 has activated a cross-section of stakeholders and opened public

dialogue on the topic. However, until the introduction of STRIDE conferences most of deliberations were on formal education. These conferences have increased the awareness of a need to introduce a competency-based and integrated education and training system.

The intermediate result hopefully will be the adoption by the committee at its May 13th meeting of some of the ideas put forward by the Working Groups and Prof. Bellis presented during the Third National Conference on Education and Training conducted on May 9th.

4. Banking

The Director of SBT, a STRIDE L/T graduate, has introduced a new and affordable loan system that has resulted in loans being available to women who hold 62% of the loan portfolio.

The Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Swaziland reported that the two STRIDE returnees have introduced disbursement processing systems which are faster and serve their customers better. He also noted that the institutional development effort by Garry Whyte Associates has improved the work of various offices and has introduced a new understanding of teamwork. However, this has not impacted on the overall organizational performance to yield discernable effects.

The project's ability to effect improvement in policies, regulations and procedures promulgated or used in the public sector.

In the field of Education and Training, the STRIDE-sponsored seminars on National Education and Training Standards of Professor Ian Bellis, the principal architect of revised standards in South Africa, has profoundly influenced the work of that particular NDS sub-committee. Initial drafts of the work of this sub-committee evidence his influence, and its final draft will follow in the wake of his third and final seminar. If it follows the principles he has managed to establish in totally restructuring the educational system in the RSA, Swaziland will undergo a total overhaul of its own outdated system by redefining the role of education in Swazi society and integrating its currently compartmentalized formal and vocational training institutions.

Though not promulgated as official policy yet, both government and private training institutions participating in STRIDE-sponsored Competency Based HRD seminars appear to have Competency Based training as a standard in reformulating their training curricula.

The STRIDE-sponsored seminars and workshops held for employers and labor unions have culminated in the first draft vision statement promulgated in Swaziland which was jointly drafted by the leaders from these two sectors. This joint declaration is expected to have a definite effect on future drafting of Labor Regulations.

Under STRIDE-sponsorship, newly elected local and municipal councilmen have been given their first courses in Administrative and Financial Management, returning to their locales with a more realistic view of the social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of local projects.

The appropriateness and effectiveness of the redirection established by the project after the mid-term evaluation.

The shift in STRIDE strategy during Phase II of this activity was a very appropriate response to a program environment which became totally different during the project's first three years. The major training components of project might have run their course as originally planned, but their total effect would have been marginal compared to what has been achieved by this redirection of emphasis and target groups.

In a country setting, where Swaziland's neighbors were experiencing fundamental changes in political and economic life and where internally forces--particularly in the industrial relations arena--were beginning to challenge the status quo, a new STRIDE strategy was employed. It mobilized a relatively large number of people to interact on a large number of topics relevant to critical issues confronting Swaziland. These were cross-interest groups brought into STRIDE-sponsored activities. They constituted a critical mass, and the dynamics of their dialogues is having a pronounced effect through its airing in the local media. In the absence of political parties, these STRIDE activities have become the platforms where the collective views and proposed policies of different interest groups are brought to bear.

In summary, the total impact of this activity has surpassed its initial objectives thanks to a flexibility employed at mid-term. This allowed a shift in its strategy from components found to address non-responsive or less-than-impressive target groups, to groups who are now exercising a positive, progressive influence on national thinking and planning. It has been STRIDE serving as a focal point, catalyst and neutral fora in this process which allows this single project undertaking to be instrumental in the degree of public participation influencing future events.

2.2.6 Sustainability

Typically the sustainability of a project is assessed by the lasting influence and support engendered by the activities conducted prior to its final evaluation. While this is certainly part of this evaluation, there is another dimension added by the relatively recent shift in emphasis in training in Phase II of this project, its impressive achievements, and the momentum attained along with expectations generated by STRIDE just within the past year.

The knowledge and methodologies which L/T training imparted to participants during Phase I of STRIDE appears being utilized. While some undoubtedly have problems in putting new concepts obtained in their training to work, most appear to be in working environments receptive to the innovations and new programs they are trying to implement. The same can be said for much of the S/T training funded under Phase I of this project.

In having evolved from the training and institutional strengthening project of 1990 into a flexible response mechanism in the realm of Democratic Governance in 1994, STRIDE's record of achievements in the latter realm is relatively recent. Most of these achievements represent the initial steps into such complex arenas as national reform of education and training systems; reconciliation of views and positions of employers, labor federations and the government; constitutional reform; a new labor relations act; modernization and improvement of government and private and banking sector services; and administrative and financial management training of a recently elected echelon of local and municipal officials.

The greater part of the training imparted under Phase II of STRIDE appears sustainable only if selected segments of it are continued and refined during the next twelve months. STRIDE has been the only vehicle in Swaziland recognized as completely neutral in its approach to problems dividing major players in Swaziland's economic, social and political structures. Its seminars, workshops have provided the fora for a complete airing of views and positions by parties previously antagonistic to one another. Differences are being resolved, systems are being put into place, but the process has only just begun.

These next twelve months will be a critical period for Swaziland. It may or may not witness the framing of a new constitution; the enactment of the work of the National Development Strategy with the results of its eighteen months of effort due to be published within the next two months; the adoption of new education and training standards; coordination of investments in infrastructure and the agricultural and industrial sectors; a new Labor Relations Law; and various pieces of legislation now needed to make Swaziland more attractive to foreign capital investment. All of these potential activities underline the need for the STRIDE Project to continue the work begun in its Phase II to assure that the activities undertaken to date will culminate in solid achievements.

Section 3 -- Recommendations

1. Extend the stay of the present Aurora Chief-of-Party in Swaziland from the scheduled closing date of the STRIDE Office on July 31, 1996 to May 1, 1997 to coincide with closing date of the Aurora contract and the PACD of May 31, 1997. There appear to be sufficient uncommitted funds in the contract pipeline, and if needed, in the USAID-administered portion of the STRIDE project as well, to maintain approximately the current level of activities planned during the next three months through May 1, 1997, as well as the funding required for the operations of the STRIDE office and its current staff.
2. Following close-out of USAID/Swaziland on September 30, 1996, the USAID Regional Office in Gaborone, Botswana should assume management oversight of the STRIDE Office in Swaziland to assure that STRIDE activities make a smooth transition and fit into regional projects designed to address such issues, particularly constitution building.
3. The Aurora field office in South Africa, in conjunction with the USAID Regional Office in Botswana, should search for possible NGOs and/or non-profit institutes in the field of governance with a view to promoting liaisons and perhaps partnerships between those with some track record in S.A. and think tanks in a formative stage in Swaziland. The Institute for Democracy and Leadership as well as the nucleus of impressive talent which served as the driving force on the National Development Strategy might be considered as potential candidates.

Section 4 -- Lessons Learned

Lessons learned in the course of implementing the STRIDE project are as follows.

4.1 National Training Plan

Most often training is viewed primarily as a way of building the capability of individuals and building the capacity of institutions. Upon the foundation of skilled individuals and strengthened organizations, sectoral or national level impacts are to follow.

During Phase II STRIDE reversed that traditional emphasis. It aimed directly at inducing sectoral impacts (e.g. the education and training system) and national impacts (e.g. improved industrial relations). In order to accomplish this, training had to be designed differently in order to extend change to whole communities of interested stakeholders. First, conferences and workshops were used to mobilize and engage large numbers of people from diverse interest groups. Second, every training event was seen as requiring another follow-up activity, such as forming working groups, producing widely disseminated follow-up reports, and organizing follow-up courses or workshops on specialized topics for smaller delegations of people. Third, follow-up conferences and meetings would then be used to bring the groups back together again to reflect on progress and review the agenda for change. STRIDE purposefully opened the door to broad participation, facilitated the development of networks across interest groups, and gave people an opportunity to set clearer vision and goals for sectoral and national change.

4.2 Project Steering Committee

The record established by the performance of the STRIDE Steering Committee could serve as a model for other training projects. Such a committee is critical to the success of a project and is only effective if it is comprised of individuals with authority to represent their sectors and organizations and who have genuine respect for differences of opinion. They also must share a vision of how to use training as a vehicle to promote significant organizational, sectoral or national change rather seeing training as merely a means of providing skills and knowledge to individuals.

The committee must be transparent in its decision making and have clear standards and procedures for scrutinizing and approving applications for training. This is particularly true in regard to L/T training which offers considerable potential reward to an individual for career advancement.

4.3 Contractor Backstopping

The contractors record of no drop-outs and an average record of a return rate of trainees completing academic courses within 80% of the normal time usually scheduled deserves mention of the practices put into effect to achieve these records:

1. Close scrutiny of the goals of the participant and the curricula of the possible institutions to be utilized to insure a match;
2. Installation of a toll-free 800 number for all participants to call the contractor's home office at any time they might have problems or questions;
3. Contacting the faculty advisors of every participant each time the quarterly academic reports were received to assure the school was meeting the participant's expectations, the participants were meeting academic standards, and exploring what could be done if such were not the case;
4. Going to the campus to confer with participants and their advisors as and when problems came into focus;
5. Circulating a monthly newsletter among participants with articles gathered from Swaziland newspapers by the contractor's office in the participants' home country;
6. Utilizing mostly schools in state university systems to get the best bargains for the tuition paid, and then bettering this arrangement by negotiating with the school in question to have USAID-funded participants accorded the same tuition as state residents.

4.4 Host Government & Private Sector

It appears that when nominating staff for training, the institutions responsible made advance preparation for the new skills acquired by their staff to be put to good use upon their return.

The foregoing factor, along with post-training promotions according to performance, appear to be major incentives in establishing a 100% return rate of trainees to the institutions from which they departed.

4.5 USAID

The STRIDE Project has demonstrated how a project begun as a traditional training activity can be modified as needed to support a very different strategy of achieving Strategic Objectives required by major changes in the environment in which an assistance program is operating; such flexibility is a highly desirable feature in any training project administered in today's world.

Any undertaking in the realm of Democratic Governance by its very nature does not lend itself to abrupt termination; such projects initiated on a bilateral basis should be assessed with a view to having their most important components assumed by regional projects aiming at the same goals.

Regional project linkages with their bilateral counterparts in Democratic Governance, and the eventual phase-in of regional to replace bilateral backstopping of these projects, will still require extensive oversight

and monitoring within the country being affected through national, regional or international NGOs operating in this field; they cannot be solely managed by and from a Regional Office.